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EXISTING CONDITIONS

The following discussion and inventory of existing conditions sets the foundation to inform and guide the development of the North Adams Comprehensive Plan. This information, together with the Planning Priorities summary, help identify and shape the direction of the plan by making clear the various circumstances, priorities and dynamics present within the community.

The information has been organized under the following headings:

- *Location and Context*
- *Population*
- *Land Use*
- *Economy*
- *Agriculture*
- *Natural Resources*
- *Open Space and Recreations*
- *Historic and Cultural Resources*
- *Housing and Neighborhoods*
- *Public Infrastructure and Services*

LOCATION AND CONTEXT

The city of North Adams is located in northern Berkshire County, MA and is bordered by the towns of Adams to the south, Clarksburg to the north, Florida to the east and Williamstown to the west. See Location and Context Map. North Adams serves as the destination for goods and services for many residents of its neighboring and nearby communities.

In 1739, the Commonwealth conducted surveys that eventually led to the creation of the townships of Clarksburg (later town of Clarksburg), West Hoosuck (later town of Williamstown), and East Hoosuck. In 1760, the Commonwealth sold East Hoosuck to Nathan Jones, John Murray and Elisha Jones, upon the condition that they develop the area. Early settlers from as far away as Rhode Island saw greater potential for industry than agriculture, given the potential for water power from the north and south branches of the Hoosic River, and the rocky terrain which would limit farming. By 1875, the population of the township of East Hoosuck had grown significantly, up to 15,760, and given the small town centers that were growing separate and apart from each other, the township formally separated in 1878, creating the town of Adams and the town of North Adams. The population of North Adams continued at a healthy pace, from 10,191 in 1880 up to 16,704 by 1890. By 1895, the “Town Meeting” form of government became cumbersome, which led the incorporation of the city of North Adams in April 1895.

North Adams encompasses 20.6 square miles (13,193 acres) of rich topography. The city is located in the Hoosac Valley at the confluence of the northern and southern branches of the Hoosic River. Elevation throughout the community ranges from 2,963 ft. on Mount Williams to 609 ft. along the Hoosic River near the Williamstown/North Adams line. The city has a dramatic landscape, nestled in a low valley and surrounded by the Green Mountain range to the north, the Hoosac Range to the east, and Mount Greylock,

the state's highest peak, to the southwest. North Adams is generally cooler than adjacent areas, due to the microclimates generated by the rugged terrain surrounding the community.

POPULATION

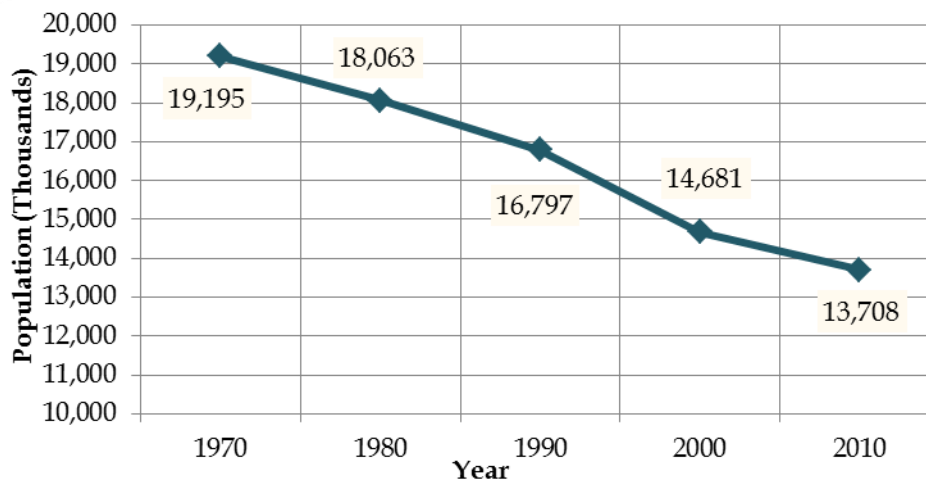
North Adams' community characteristics have undergone a dynamic shift since the early 1900's, with notable population loss largely attributable to a steady decline in traditional mill and manufacturing economic activity. The city has, however, recently entered into a renaissance thanks, in part, to the growing presence of the MASS MoCA, Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts (MCLA) and a focus on the arts and related industries.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Population: The 2010 Census lists the city's population at 13,708 people, far from the population of 24,200 in the year 1900. North Adams first dipped under 20,000 in the 1960 Census (19,905) and has continued to reduce since then, though the population loss slowed in the last decade. Between 1970 and 2010 the city experienced a 28.59% loss, the sharpest drop occurring between 1990 and 2000. See Figure 1: North Adams Population, 1970-2010.

The town of Adams experienced similar declines during the same time period (-27.92%). Clarksburg and Williamstown fared better, with 1970-2010 population losses of 14.34% and 8.28%, respectively. Berkshire County's population decreased 12.2% from 1970-2010. See Table 1: North Berkshire Population Change, 1970-2010.

Figure 1: North Adams Population, 1970-2010



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1970, 1980, 1990, 2000 and 2010 Census data

Table 1: North Berkshire Population Change, 1970-2010

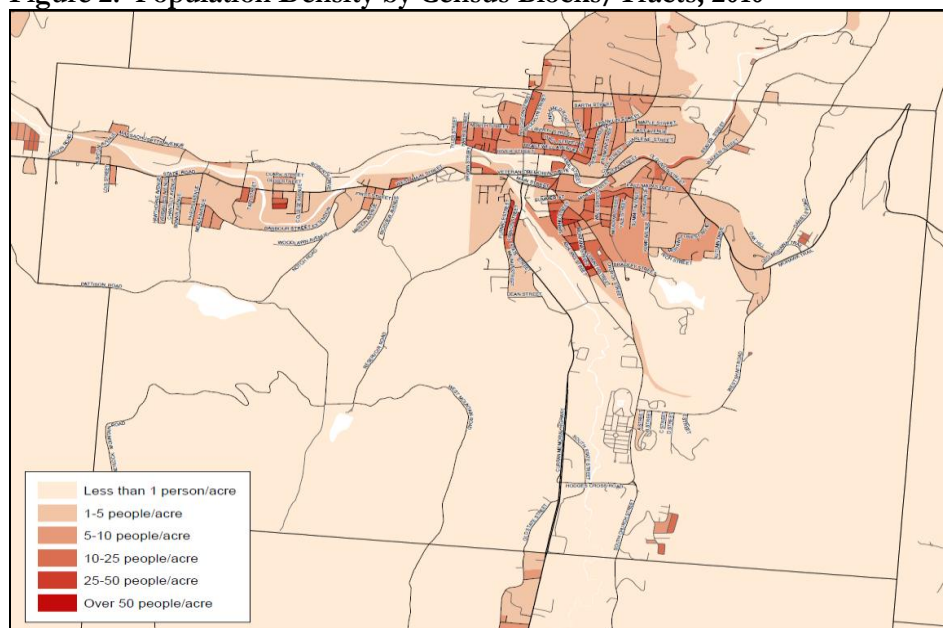
Population Area	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	Change 1970- 2010	% Change 1970-2010
Adams	11,772	10,381	9,445	8,809	8,485	-3,287	-27.92%
Cheshire	3,006	3,124	3,479	3,401	3,235	229	7.62%
Clarksburg	1,987	1,871	1,745	1,686	1,702	-285	-14.34%
Florida	672	730	742	676	752	80	11.90%
New Ashford	247	159	192	247	228	-19	-7.69%

North Adams	19,195	18,063	16,797	14,681	13,708	-5,487	-28.59%
Savoy	322	644	634	705	692	370	114.91%
Williamstown	8,454	8,741	8,220	8,424	7,754	-700	-8.28%
Northern Berkshire County	45,655	43,713	41,254	38,629	36,556	-9,099	-20%
Berkshire County	149,402	145,110	139,352	134,953	131,219	-18,183	-12.17%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1970, 1980, 1990, 2000 and 2010 Census data

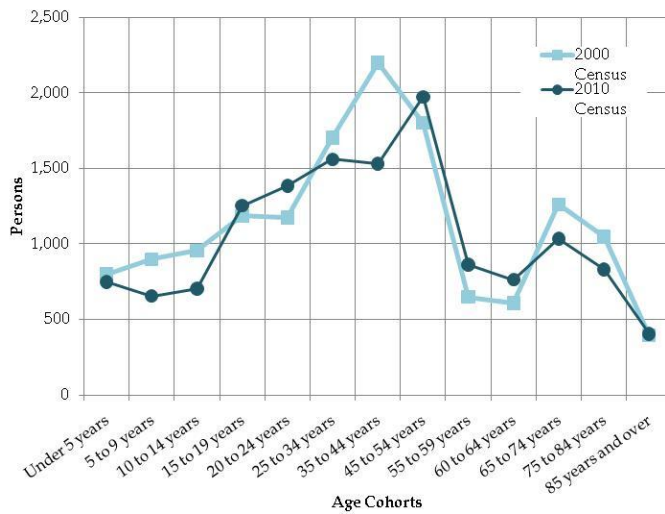
Density: Because of the city's surrounding geography and protected open space, the majority of development has occurred in the valley floor areas adjacent to the river. At the time of the 2010 Census, 61.4% (8,420 persons) of the community's population resided within one mile of the downtown, as illustrated in Figure 2: Population Density by Census Block/Tract, 2010. The Route 2 corridor west towards Williamstown is the next most populous area in the city, with limited rural development elsewhere.

Figure 2: Population Density by Census Blocks/Tracts, 2010



Source: Berkshire Regional Planning Commission and U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census data

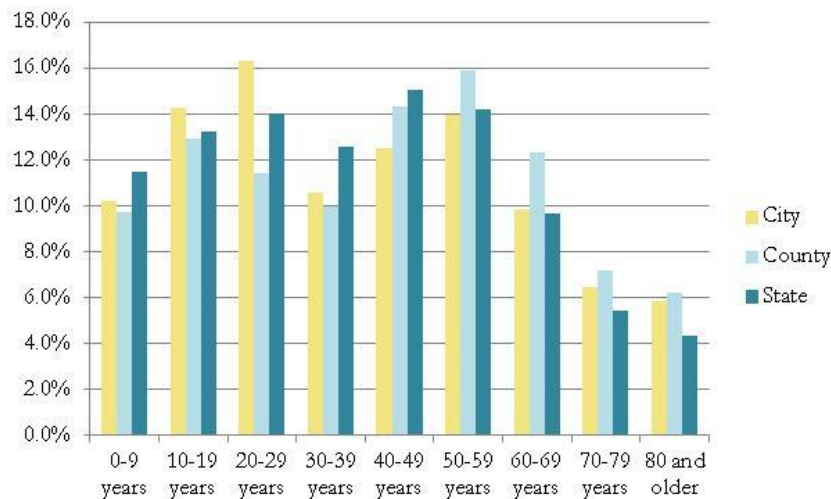
Age Distribution: The median age of residents in North Adams in the 2010 Census was 38.9 years old, which is a slight increase (2.4%) over the median age of 38 from the 2000 Census. There were, however, some significant age shifts in the population during this same time period. The largest percent change in age cohort was in the 35-44 year olds, (-30.4%). There was a loss of school-aged, those aged 5-9 years (-27.2%) and 10-14 years (-26.5%). The older population cohorts aged 75-84 years and 65-74 years, also decreased since 2000 (-20.6% and -17.9%, respectively). The population with a significant growth between 2000 and 2010 is in the baby-boomer generation, aged 55-59 years (33.2%) and 60-64 years (25.3%). There was also a 17.9% increase in the 20-24 year olds. See Figure 3: Age Distribution, 2000-2010.

Figure 3: Age Distribution, 2000-2010

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 and 2010 Census data

These changes in age distribution relate to a number of social changes and changing pressures on services. The losses in the young children and middle-age persons indicate young families may be leaving the city. The areas of growth are primarily in the baby boomer generation which have and will continue to affect health and elder services in the years to come. The younger baby boomers are included in the 45-54 age range, which only increased 9.4% since 2010, but which comprises 14.4% of the entire population.

The city's median age (38.9 years) is lower than the county overall (44.7 years), which likely is a reflection of its college student population; about 2,100 undergraduates attend MCLA. According to the 2010 Census data, 34.6% of the city's population was 24 years of age or younger; 22.6% were between the ages of 25 and 44, and 43% were aged 45 years and over. See Figure 4: Age Distribution Comparison, 2010.

Figure 4: Age Distribution Comparison, 2010

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census data

Racial Diversity: The population is predominantly white (12,744 persons, 93%). The second and third largest racial groups were persons of Two or More Races (351 persons, 2.6%) and Black or African American

(310 persons, 2.3%). 476 persons classified themselves as Hispanic or Latino (3.5%). See Table 2: Racial Composition, 2000-2010.

Overall, the city has become more diverse in the past decade. Between 2000 and 2010, White population decreased (-1,202 persons; an 8.6% decrease) while the number of persons classifying themselves as Hispanic or Latino saw the most increase during the period (+178 persons, a 59.7% increase). See Figure 5: Change in Racial Composition, 2000-2010.

Table 2: Racial Composition, 2000-2010

	2000 Census		2010 Census	
	Actual #	% of Population	Actual #	% of Population
White	13,946	95%	12744	93%
Black or African American	245	1.70%	310	2.3%
American Indian and Alaska Native	39	0.10%	43	0.3%
Asian	117	0.80%	100	0.7%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	5	0%	8	0.1%
Some Other Race	116	0.8%	152	1.1%
Two or more races	212	1.40%	351	2.6%
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	298	2%	476	3.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 and 2010 Census

Figure 5: Change in Racial Composition, 2000-2010



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 and 2010 Census

LAND USE

There are two methods of calculating land use in Massachusetts: 1) land use by parcel, which is based on local tax assessor information, and 2) land use by development footprint as interpreted by the state using aerial photography. In evaluating land use, it is useful to consider both methods because each provides particular information. The former method, use by parcel data, was not available for the city at the time of this summary. The city has applied for and has been awarded a grant to modernize the parcel and assessor

Existing Conditions Summary

records; the results will be not available until the summer of 2012. The state land use data layer, which combines electronic land use information and automated aerial analysis, is therefore the basis of the following land use summary.

Existing Land Use – State Data

The majority of land within North Adams (77.8%) is forest or wetlands. Residential land uses occupy 9.1% of the total land area and tend to be concentrated within and around the downtown area. Commercial uses (1.9%) primarily are in the downtown area and along the Route 2 and Route 8 corridors. See Existing Land Use, 2005 Map.

Table 3: Acres by Land Use, State Data (2005)

Land Use	Acres	Percent
Natural/Habitat		
Brushland/Successional	7	0.05%
Forested Wetland	130	0.98%
Forest	9,531	72.24%
Open Land	158	1.20%
Water	183	1.39%
Non-Forested Wetland	185	1.40%
<i>Subtotal</i>	10,194	77.27%
Parks and Recreation		
Cemetery	84	0.64%
Participation Recreation	93	0.70%
Water-Based Recreation	8	0.06%
<i>Subtotal</i>	185	1.40%
Agriculture		
Pasture	135	1.02%
Cropland	278	2.10%
<i>Subtotal</i>	413	3.13%

Land Use	Acres	Percent
Residential		
Very Low Density Residential ¹	66	0.50%
Low Density Residential ²	266	2.01%
Medium Density Residential ³	335	2.54%
High Density Residential ⁴	564	4.27%
Multi-Family Residential ⁵	303	2.30%
<i>Subtotal</i>	1,534	11.63%
Business and Employment		
Commercial	248	1.88%
Transitional	22	0.17%
Urban Public/Institutional	132	1.00%
Industrial	155	1.17%
Mining	48	0.37%
Junkyard	7	0.05%
<i>Subtotal</i>	612	4.64%
Utility and Infrastructure		
Power line/Utility	110	0.83%
Transportation	117	0.89%
Waste Disposal	29	0.22%
<i>Subtotal</i>	256	1.94%
<i>Total</i>	13,193	100.00%

Source: 2005 State Land Use data layer, Berkshire Regional Planning Commission GIS (May, 2011)

ZONING

The North Adams Zoning Ordinance was drafted and adopted in 1956 to regulate the use of land, buildings and structures to ensure the general interests of public health, safety and welfare are maintained. In the 60 years since its adoption, there have been a number of minor modifications and updates made incrementally to address a specific local issues or needs but there has never been a comprehensive evaluation or update.

The city's Zoning Ordinance contains 19 base districts and three overlay districts. The base zoning districts are Residential (R-1, R-1A, R-2, R-3), Rural Residential (RU-1), Affordable Housing (AH-1), Neighborhood Commercial (CA-1, CA-2, CP-1), Central Business (CB-1, CB-1), Heavy Business (CC-1, CC-2), Airport (AP-

¹ Housing on > 1 acre lots and very remote, rural housing

² Housing on 1/2 - 1 acre lots.

³ Housing on 1/4 - 1/2 acre lots.

⁴ Housing on smaller than 1/4 acre lots.

⁵ Duplexes (usually with two front doors, two entrance pathways, and sometimes two driveways), apartment buildings, condominium complexes, including buildings and maintained lawns.

Existing Conditions Summary

1), Industrial (I-1, I-2, I-P), Urban Renewal Project (UR-1, UR-2). The three overlay districts include Floodplain (FP) and Floodway (FW), and Wireless Communication. See Table 4: Summary of North Adams Zoning Districts.

The majority of land within the city is zoned Rural Residential RU-1 (55%), a district which includes most of the state land holdings in the city, including Mount Greylock State Reservation and Savoy Mountain State Forest. The next largest district areas are also residential: R-2 (11%), R-1 (7.86%), R-3 (6.58%), and AH-Affordable Housing (5.17%). Industrially zoned land comprises 5.16% of the city's total area, and there are few industrial sites in condition ready for development. The remaining districts each occupy less than 5% of the total land area. See Zoning Map.

Table 4: Summary of North Adams Zoning Districts

Zoning	General Description ⁶	Minimum Lot Area Req.	Minimum Lot Area Per Dwelling Unit	Maximum Number of Dwelling Units
Affordable Housing District				
AH-1	Intended for single-family and multifamily residential uses. See Section 6A for additional permitted uses.	16,000(a)	8,000	5
Airport District				
AP-1	Intended for the operation of an airport and ancillary uses, as well as any use permitted in Section 8, excluding 8.1.7.	40,000	--	--
Neighborhood Commercial Districts				
CA-1	Uses permitted in a residential district and other commercial uses described in Section 7.	7,500	3,750	12
CA-2	Uses permitted in a residential and CA districts, excluding Section 5.1.1; other commercial uses described in Section 7.2.	5,000	2,500	17
CP-1	Intended for commercial and residential uses, see Section 7.5 for permitted uses.	14,700	3,600	12
Central Business Districts				
CB-1	Uses permitted in a residential and CA districts, excluding Section 5.1.1; other commercial uses described in Section 7.2.	5,000	3,600	12
CB-2	Uses permitted in a residential and CA districts, excluding Section 5.1.1; other commercial uses described in Section 7.2.	5,000	3,600	12

⁶ Sections noted refer to the Zoning Ordinance of the City of North Adams.

Zoning	General Description ⁷	Minimum Lot Area Req.	Minimum Lot Area Per Dwelling Unit	Maximum Number of Dwelling Units
Heavy Business Districts				
CC-1	Uses permitted in a residential, CA and CC districts; other commercial uses described in Section 7.3.	20,000	--	--
CC-2	Uses permitted in a residential, CA and CC districts; other commercial uses described in Section 7.3.	10,000	--	--
Industrial Districts				
I-1	Any nonresidential use permitted in a district previously listed upon issuance of a Special Permit. Residential uses permitted by Special Permit.	40,000	--	--
I-2	Any use permitted in I-1, excluding uses listed in Sections 8.18, 8.1.9, 8.1.10 and 8.1.11.	10,000	--	--
I-P	Intended for Industrial type uses.	40,000	--	--
Residential Districts				
R-1	Intended for residential uses primarily; other uses are permitted by Special Permit.	16,000	8,000	5
R-1A	Intended for residential uses primarily; other uses are permitted by Special Permit.	24,000	24,000	2
R-2	Intended for residential uses primarily; other uses are permitted by Special Permit.	11,250	5,625	8
R-3	Intended for residential uses primarily; other uses are permitted by Special Permit.	7,200	3,600	12
Rural Residential District				
RU-1	Intended for low density residential; other uses are permitted by Special Permit.	40,000	20,000	2
Urban Renewal Districts				
UR-1	This district is to be used to implement the land use controls of the urban renewal plan entitled Main Street Urban Renewal Plan.	Parcel Specific	Parcel Specific	Parcel Specific

⁷ Sections noted refer to the Zoning Ordinance of the City of North Adams.

Existing Conditions Summary

UR-2	This district is to be used to implement the land use controls of the urban renewal plan entitled Western Gateway Urban Heritage Park Urban Renewal Plan.	Parcel Specific	Parcel Specific	Parcel Specific
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Overlay Districts				
Floodplain District (FP)	The purpose of this district is to protect human life and property from hazards of periodic flooding; protect, preserve and maintain the water recharge areas in the City; and assure the continuation of the natural flow pattern of watercourses within the city for adequate floodwater storage capacity.	--	--	--
Floodway District (FW)	The purpose of this district is to protect human life and property from hazards of periodic flooding; protect, preserve and maintain the water recharge areas in the City; and assure the continuation of the natural flow pattern of watercourses within the city for adequate floodwater storage capacity.	--	--	--
Wireless Communication District	This overlay district is intended to minimize the visual and environmental impacts associated with personal wireless facilities on the character and resources of the City.	--	--	--

Source: City of North Adams, Zoning Ordinance

Table 5: Existing Zoning by Acreage

Zoning	Acres	Land Area
<i>Affordable Housing District</i>		
AH-1	682	5.17%
<i>Airport District</i>		
AP-1	122	0.92%
<i>Neighborhood Commercial Districts</i>		
CA-1	62	0.47%
CA-2	18	0.14%
CP-1	4	0.03%
<i>Central Business Districts</i>		
CB-1	54	0.41%
CB-2	11	0.08%
<i>Heavy Business Districts</i>		
CC-1	77	0.58%
CC-2	20	0.15%
<i>Industrial Districts</i>		
I-1	681	5.16%
I-2	200	1.52%
I-P	46	0.35%
<i>Residential Districts</i>		
R-1	1,038	7.87%
R-1A	498	3.77%
R-2	1,490	11.29%
R-3	868	6.58%
<i>Rural Residential District</i>		
RU-1	7,273	55.13%
<i>Urban Renewal Districts</i>		
UR-1	30	0.23%
RU-2	18	0.14%
Total	13,192	100.00%

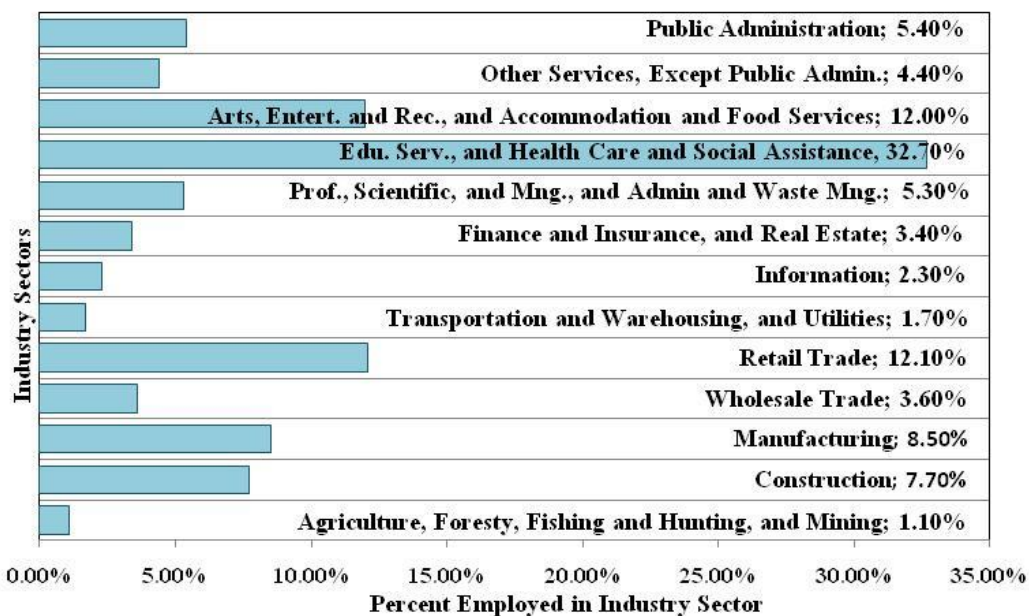
Source: Berkshire Regional Planning Commission, GIS

ECONOMY

INDUSTRY STATISTICS

Employment by Sector: The primary employment sectors in North Adams are Educational Services, Health Care and Social Assistance (32.7%), Retail Trade (12.1%), Arts, Entertainment and Recreation, and Accommodation and Food Services (12.0%), Manufacturing (8.5%), and Construction (7.7%). Together these five sectors employ 72.8% of the local workforce. Figure 6: Comparison of Employment by Industry Sector, 2009. The largest industry sector (Educational Services, Health Care and Social Assistance) employs 2,022 North Adams residents, which includes the largest employers in the community, the North Adams Regional Hospital (550 employees), North Adams School District (450 employees) and the Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts (300 employees). This high percentage of residents employed in one sector indicates an imbalance in the overall employment opportunities; a more evenly distributed employment force contributes to economic stability.

Figure 6: Comparison of Employment by Industry Sector, 2009



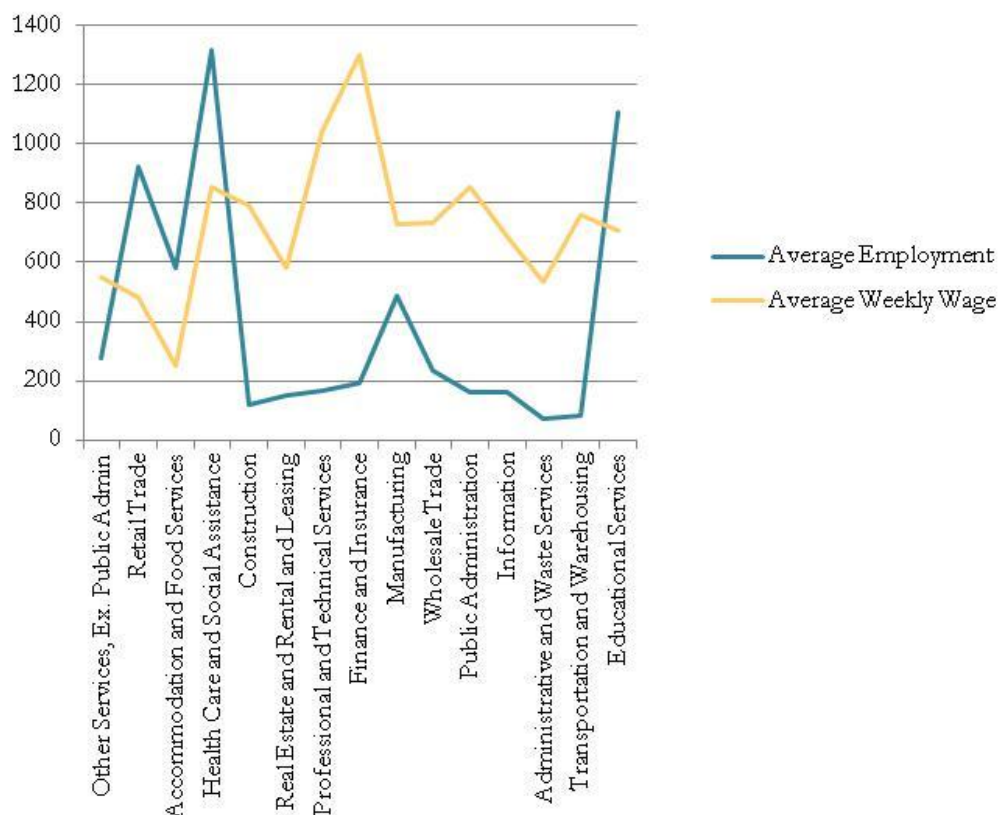
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2005-2009 American Communities Survey data

Wages by Sector: The top five employment sectors pay varying average wages. The largest employment sector (Educational Services, Health Care and Social Assistance) has a relatively high average weekly wage (\$709 to \$856), as do Construction (\$790) and Manufacturing (\$730). In comparison, the second and third largest industry sectors, Retail Trade and Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation/Accommodation and Food Services, which together comprise 24.1% of the workforce, provide employees with average weekly wages ranging far lower (\$253 to \$483). The highest paying sectors of Professional and Technical Services (\$1,044 average weekly wage) and Finance and Industry (\$1,302 average weekly wage) which combined employ only 8.7% of the workforce. See Table 6: Comparison of Industry Sector Indicators, 2009 and Figure 7: Industry Sector Employment Levels by Average Weekly Wage, North Adams (2009).

Table 6: Comparison of Industry Sector Indicators, 2009

Industry	Establishments	Total Wages	Average Employment	Average Weekly Wage
Other Services, Ex. Public Admin	88	\$7,940,608	278	\$549
Retail Trade	64	\$23,234,288	925	\$483
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation and Food Services	46	\$7,670,582	583	\$253
Health Care and Social Assistance	45	\$58,658,503	1,318	\$856
Construction	34	\$4,970,681	121	\$790
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	22	\$4,553,780	150	\$584
Professional and Technical Services	22	\$9,117,840	168	\$1,044
Finance and Insurance	16	\$13,063,545	193	\$1,302
Manufacturing	15	\$18,403,004	485	\$730
Wholesale Trade	15	\$8,878,042	233	\$733
Public Administration	14	\$7,215,382	162	\$857
Information	13	\$5,760,868	161	\$688
Administrative and Waste Services	12	\$1,993,134	72	\$532
Transportation and Warehousing	7	\$3,362,288	85	\$761
Educational Services	6	\$40,717,514	1,105	\$709
Total, All Industries	431	\$221,298,020	6,198	\$687

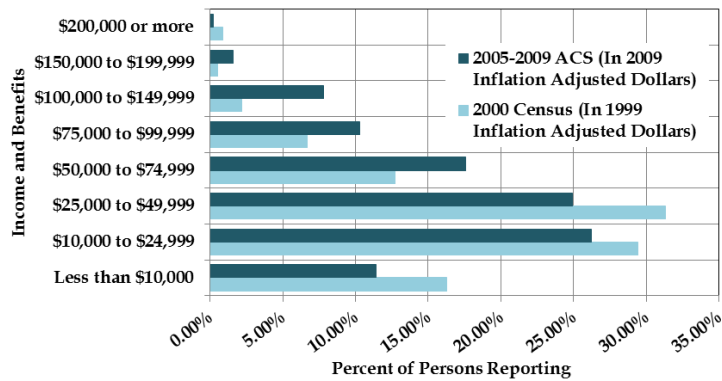
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2005-2009 American Communities Survey data

Figure 7: Industry Sector Employment Levels by Average Weekly Wage, North Adams (2009)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2005-2009 American Communities Survey data

INCOME

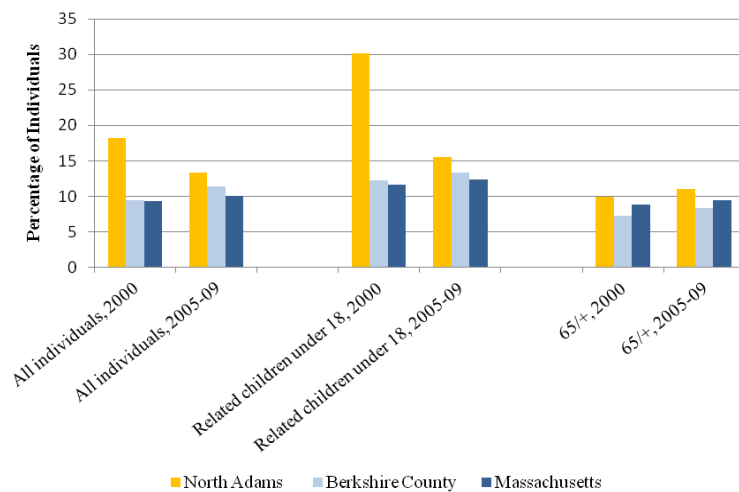
According to data from the U.S. Census Bureau, North Adams' household incomes have moderately increased during the last decade, 21.2% from 2000 to 2009. A majority of households made less than \$50,000 in 2000 (77%), while 62% did in 2009. Between 2000 and 2009, the median household income rose 21%, from \$27,601 to \$35,020. From 2000 to 2009 there were increases in higher median household income levels (\$150,000-199,000, \$100,000-\$149,000, \$75,000-\$99,999, and \$50,000-\$74,999), while there were decreases in those earning at the lower income levels (\$25,000-\$49,999, \$10,000-\$24,999 and less than \$10,000). See Figure 8: Median Household Income, 2000-2009.

Figure 8: Median Household Income, 2000-2009

Median Household Income:
2000 - \$27,601
2009 - \$35,020

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau: 2000 Census and 2005-2009 American Community Survey data

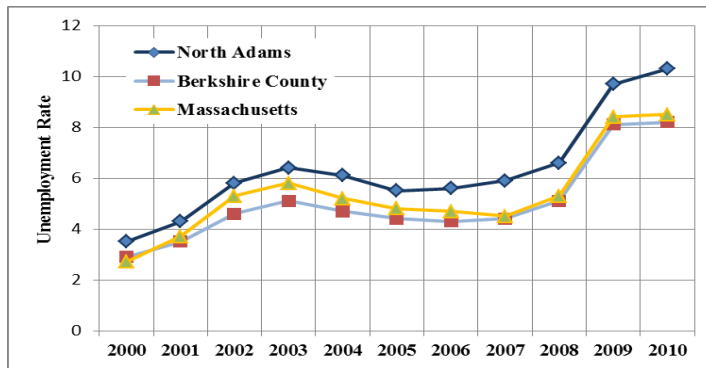
North Adams has higher poverty rates than the county overall and the state, both in the 2000 Census and the 2005-2009 American Communities Survey. In the 2000, North Adams had a significant percentage of related children under 18 in poverty (30.1%) compared to the county (12.3%) and the state (12.4%). The rate of poverty among children appears to be decreasing. In the American Communities Survey the percentage of related children in poverty had decreased to 15.5% in North Adams. See Figure 9: Poverty Rates.

Figure 9: Poverty Rates

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau: 2000 Census and 2005-2009 American Community Survey data

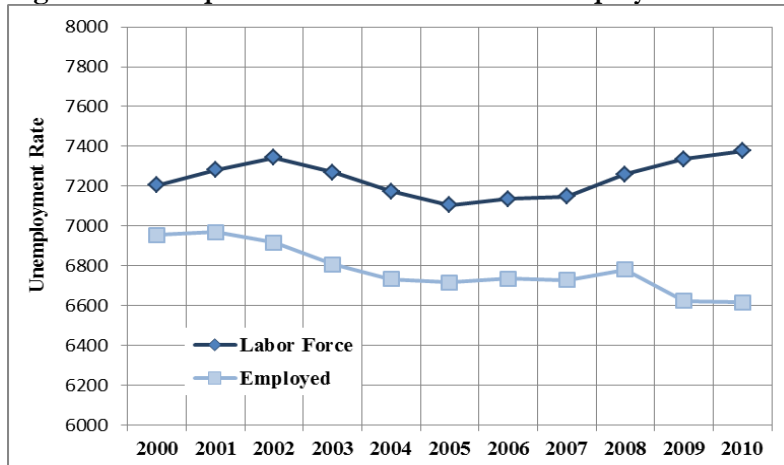
WORKFORCE

In the early part of the decade (2000-2003), the unemployment rate in North Adams increased from 3.5% to 6.1%. The unemployment rate leveled off for the next three years, but rose in the latter part of the decade from 6.6% in 2008 to a high of 10.3% in 2010. These fluctuations follow a similar pattern to Berkshire County and Massachusetts, with the county experiencing nearly the same or lower unemployment rates than the rest of the state. The unemployment rate in the city remained higher than that of either the county or state throughout this time period, with the largest gap in 2010. See Figure 10: Unemployment Rate Comparison 2000-2010.

Figure 10: Unemployment Rate Comparison 2000-2010

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2000-2010

The unemployment rate is primarily defined by the gap between two factors – the size of the labor force and the number of persons employed. In North Adams the size of the labor force has grown since 2005 (from 7,106 to 7,377). The number employed remained fairly steady from 2004 (6,733) through 2008 (6,780), but then reduced 2.4% between 2008 and 2010. The difference between the labor force and those employed grew from 2000 (249) to 2004 (441). In 2005 the gap lessened, with 391 persons in the labor force not employed. In 2006 the difference grew again and steadily through 2010, when 760 persons in the workforce were not employed. The larger workforce and the reduction in persons employed compound to produce the high unemployment rate (10.3% in 2010). See Figure 12: Comparison of Labor Force and Employed in North Adams 2000-2010.

Figure 12: Comparison of Labor Force and Employed in North Adams 2000-2010

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2000-2010

AGRICULTURE

While the Berkshire region has a long tradition of agriculture, there is limited agricultural activity within North Adams. Some of this is due to the terrain and conservation patterns, which afford limited opportunities for larger-scale farming; agricultural uses occupy only 3% of the total land area. As illustrated

in the Agriculture map, prime agricultural soils within the city are located along the river and floodplain areas that generally follow the Route 8 corridor and west of the downtown near Harriman & West Airport, which was once pasture land for the Mt. Williams Dairy of Williamstown. Prime agricultural soils along Route 8 the old railroad route and are predominantly zoned for industrial use. The only other organized farm activity in the city is the Berkshire Farms Apiary, a honey producer with hives located throughout North Adams and Williamstown. This limited agricultural land supply has resulted in two trends in local food production: a strong relationship between farms supplying the North Adams Farmer's Market and residents purchasing Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) shares. Another development has been community and urban gardening within neighborhoods.

- **Farmer's Market:** Farms and CSAs in Adams, Florida, Clarksburg and Williamstown MA, as well as Pownal and Stamford VT, all participate in North Adams Farmer's Market, Saturday mornings from early July through late October. The market is held in a central downtown location, the St. Anthony's Municipal Parking Lot. Many vendors accept coupons from food assistance programs.
- **CSAs:** There are several CSA operations in the northern Berkshire region, including Square Roots Farm in Clarksburg and Caretaker Farm in Williamstown. Hoosac Harvest, a non-profit working through Berkshire Grown's *Share the Harvest* program to improve access to affordable healthy food for northern Berkshire residents, partners with Square Roots Farm to offer subsidized shares to lower income residents.
- **Community Gardens:** North Adams has a number of community garden projects in existence or underway, largely initiated by the North Adams School District and REACH for Community Health (disbanded in 2011), the community health education department of North Adams Regional Hospital.

There are gardens at each school site in North Adams where students are involved; their experience is connected to their curriculum and harvested food is donated to the Berkshire Food Project. The city also has gardens in five (5) neighborhoods with subsidized housing. The Growing Healthy garden organization (formerly a program of the North Adams Regional Hospital), now continues this work through community partnerships with the Hoosic River Revival Coalition, the North Adams Public Schools, and the Northern Berkshire Community Coalition. In the summer of 2012 they will create two new gardens along River Street, one across from the Porches Inn and the other behind the former St. Joseph's High School, which is now housing for senior citizens.

NATURAL RESOURCES

The Natural Resources of North Adams include water and land resources and supporting habitats.

WATER RESOURCES

The City's water resources are part of a complex community network. In many instances, these resources have been an essential part of the City's economy and sustained human life. The creeks, lakes, reservoirs, river and wetlands throughout the community are all part of the community's water network. There are 498 acres (3.77) of aquatic resources and habitat.

- **Watersheds:** As illustrated on the Water Resources Map, the vast majority of the city is within the Hoosic River Watershed; only the easternmost portions of the mountain range flow into the Deerfield Watershed.
- **Hoosic River:** The Hoosic River is the main river flowing through the city. The south branch flows north-west while the north branch flows west; the branches merge at Mass MoCA (formerly the Sprague Electric Company, originally the site of the Arnold Print Works). These parts of the Hoosic

River which flow through the downtown were modified by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in the 1950's following multiple severe flooding events. The Corps widened the channel and engineered concrete channels to contain the river. The channels, lack of vegetation, and raised water temperatures result in a highly compromised ecological habitat, also impacting areas downstream. More recently concerns about the chutes ecological and social implications have been expressed by the River Revival Coalition, a group of citizens exploring ways to improve water quality and reconnect people to the river while maintaining flood control. A recent flooding event during Tropical Storm Irene, September 2011, illustrated the purpose and usefulness of the chutes.

- **Lakes/Reservoirs:** There are a number of lakes and reservoirs including the Lower (Mt. Williams) and Upper (Notch) Reservoirs, Windsor Lake and Witts Pond. The main recreation facility among the City's water resources is Windsor Lake, also known as Fish Pond, which offers a park and campground in addition to swimming.
- **Wetlands:** Wetlands in the city generally follow the course of the Hoosic River, with larger areas to the south of downtown along the Route 8 corridor. Because of the important ecological and flood-control roles of wetlands, state protected priority habitat areas correlate strongly to the wetlands.

LAND RESOURCES AND HABITAT

The Massachusetts BioMap 2 illustrates the combined input of wildlife and conservation professionals from across the state. As illustrated in the Natural Resources map, these are conveyed as core habitat, including habitat for endangered and threatened species, and critical natural landscape, which encompasses supporting lands that are important to the continued health of species of concern.

Endangered and Threatened Species: There are 23 rare and endangered species within the city limits. The majority of these reside in wetland habitat areas that follow surface waterways and the mountainous areas surrounding the city's core, which are largely protected. See Table 7: North Adams Endangered and Rare Species, 2011.

Table 7: North Adams Endangered and Rare Species, 2011

Taxonomic Group	Scientific Name	Common Name	MESA Status	Most Recent Observation	Legend
Butterfly/Moth	<i>Euphyes dion</i>	Dion Skipper	T	2008	<i>Massachusetts Endangered Species Act (MESA) Status</i> (E) Endangered (T) Threat (SC) Special Concern
Dragonfly/Damselfly	<i>Boyeria grafiana</i>	Ocellated Darner	SC	2002	
	<i>Enallagma carunculatum</i>	Tule Bluet	SC	1998	
	<i>Stylurus scudderii</i>	Zebra Clubtail	SC	2004	
Fish	<i>Catostomus catostomus</i>	Longnose Sucker	SC	2003	
Vascular Plant	<i>Acer nigrum</i>	Black Maple	SC	2001	
	<i>Amelanchier bartramiana</i>	Bartram's Shadbush	T	2006	
	<i>Carex alopecoidea</i>	Foxtail Sedge	T	2004	
	<i>Carex schweinitzii</i>	Schweinitz's Sedge	E	1901	
	<i>Carex trichocarpa</i>	Hairy-fruited Sedge	T	2006	
	<i>Desmodium cuspidatum</i>	Large-bracted Tick-trefoil	T	2005	
	<i>Equisetum scirpoides</i>	Dwarf Scouring-rush	SC	1996	
	<i>Galium boreale</i>	Northern Bedstraw	E	1901	
	<i>Hydrophyllum canadense</i>	Broad Waterleaf	E	2006	
	<i>Juncus filiformis</i>	Thread Rush	E	Historic	
	<i>Malaxis monophyllos</i> var. <i>brachypoda</i>	White Adder's-mouth	E	Historic	
	<i>Milium effusum</i>	Woodland Millet	T	2004	
	<i>Panicum philadelphicum</i> ssp. <i>gattingeri</i>	Gattinger's Panic-grass	SC	1997	
	<i>Platanthera dilatata</i>	Leafy White Orchis	T	2004	
	<i>Ribes lacustre</i>	Bristly Black Currant	SC	2007	
	<i>Solidago macrophylla</i>	Large-leaved Goldenrod	T	2004	
	<i>Sorbus decora</i>	Northern Mountain-ash	E	1987	
	<i>Sporobolus neglectus</i>	Small Dropseed	E	Historic	

Sources: Massachusetts Department of Fish and Game, Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program

OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION

The city and its residents have an enviable supply of outdoor parks and recreation options held and maintained by municipal, state, and other organizations.

STATE LANDS

Five significant state land holdings define the surrounding landscape of the city:

- **Clarksburg State Forest (northwest):** The unspoiled forestland of Clarksburg State Forest offers breathtaking views of the Hoosac Range, Green Mountains and Mount Greylock. At the adjacent state park, Mausert's Pond is skirted by a scenic trail along which visitors can observe a variety of wild plants and animals. The state forest and park offers residents and visitors the opportunity to boat, camp, fish, hike, swim and picnic.
- **Florida State Forest (northeast):** At 1,757.1 acres (25.3 acres in the North Adams), Florida State Forest is pristine recreational facility. The forest provides visitors with year-round access and passive recreational opportunities. Spectacular views of the North Adams and the surrounding landscape are bountiful and stunning.
- **Mount Greylock State Reservation (southwest):** At 3,491 feet, Mount Greylock is the highest peak in Massachusetts. Rising above the surrounding Berkshire landscape, dramatic panoramic views may be seen. Massachusetts' first wilderness state park, the reserve provides visitors with the enjoyment of the wild and rugged wilderness yet in an intimate and accessible setting. Bascom Lodge is a rustic stone and wood lodge at the peak of Mount Greylock, built by the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930's to provide meals and accommodation for visitors. In recent years the Bascom Lodge Group has engaged in significant renovations to the historic structure through the Department of Conservation and Recreation's Historic Curatorship program.
- **Natural Bridge State Park (northeast):** A geologic wonder of North Adams and Massachusetts, the park is the only naturally formed white marble arch and man-made white marble dam in North America. The "natural bridge" for which the park is named, according to geologists, is 550 million year old bedrock marble, carved into an arch by the force of glacial melt water over 13,000 years ago. This park provides residents and visitors with a unique experience demonstrating the effects of glaciation.
- **Savoy Mountain State Forest/Park (southeast):** Created in 1918, the park is located atop the Hoosac Mountain Range. It is a tranquil place to fish, camp and hike. While only a small portion of the forest is located within the city limits, this resource provides year-round recreational access to spectacular natural beauty.

CITY PARKS AND RECREATION

Developed portions of the city are currently home to 44 parks and recreation facilities, including amenities like parks, playgrounds, recreation centers, athletic fields and state parks. The city boasts the only ice skating rink in the region, the Peter W. Foote Vietnam Veteran's Memorial Skating Rink on Church Street, and is home to the SteepleCats, who play at Joe Wolfe Field, and are part of the New England Collegiate Baseball League. The city has invested resources in both these recreational facilities in order to promote and enhance them as recreational resources for the region. While the city owns and manages many of these facilities, they partner with many private and non-profit organizations to improve the parks and open space network. See Table 8: Summary of City Parks and Open Space Amenities.

Table 8: Summary of City Parks and Open Space Amenities

Facility Name	Oversight	Size (acres)
Protected Lands		
Alcombright Athletic Complex	P&R	26.22
Camp Decker	P&R	21.8
The Cascades	Cons. Com.	84.5
Historic Valley Campground	P&R	34
Hoosic River	Dept. Cons. & Recr.	n/a
Joe Girardi Park	Dept. Fisheries	5.9
Mount Greylock State Reservation	Dept. Cons. & Recr.	860 (total)
Mount Williams Reserve	Water Dept.	509
Natural Bridges State Park	Dept. Cons. & Recr.	47
Noel Field Athletic Complex	P&R	24.68
Notch Reservoir	Water Dept.	1,037
Ragged Mountain Reservation	Dept. Cons. & Recr.	33.6
River Grove Park	P&R	4.7
Savoy Mountain State Forest/Park	Dept. Cons. & Recr.	547 (total)
Peter W. Foote Vietnam Veteran's Memorial Skating Rink	City	4.6
Western Gateway Heritage State Park	City	7
Windsor Lake	P&R	123
Unprotected Lands		
Alibozek Property	Private	90
Beaver Street Playground	P&R	0.5
Bernard Property	Private	46.15
Blackinton Playground	P&R	2.6
Brayton Field	P&R	1.6
Colgrove Park	P&R	0.4
Drury Senior High School	P&R	9.8
Elderly Housing Recreation Area	NAHA	0.05
Freeman Playground	P&R	2.5
Greylock School Playground	NAPSD	11.4
Houghton School Playground	P&R	0.5
Johnson School Playground	P&R	1.2
Kemp Park	P&R	8.2
Main-Ashland Street Mini Park	Highway Dept.	.01
Joseph Zavatarro Athletic Complex (MCLA)	MCLA	86
McCann Technical High School	NAPSD	7.5
Monitor Park	P&R	.02
River Street Playground	P&R	0.5
River Street Riverside park	Highway Dept.	3.63
Senior Center park	P&R	0.15
Upper/Lower Reservoir	Water Dept.	11.6
Veteran's Memorial Park	P&R	0.4

Protected Lands cannot revert to another type of property use. Some type of prior federal and/or state-related financial assistance has been used to purchase and/or improve these lands.

Unprotected Lands do not have the same legal protections as those in the protected category, but it is still in the best interest of the community to protect and maintain these lands.

Facility Name	Oversight	Size (acres)
West End Apartments play area	NAHA	4
Trailside (Horse) Farm	Private	11
Witt's Ledge	Telesystems Corp.	29
Ziemba Property	Private	100

Source: City of North Adams, 2006 Open Space Plan

HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

HISTORIC RESOURCES

In the 1980's many resources (buildings, structures, objects, areas, burial grounds, landscape features, and sites) that were of historical, architectural or archaeological importance were inventoried for significant information and condition. In addition, numerous sites in North Adams have been listed on the National Register of Historic Places, overseen by the National Parks Service, or as part of a scenic byway, overseen by the Federal Highway Administration.

Nationally Registered Districts and Properties: As of April 2011, of the city's historical resources include eight districts and 19 building or sites listed to the National Register of Historic Places. Since their listing in 1985, both the Hathaway Tenement and the Johnson Manufacturing Company were demolished. See Table 9: North Adams Historic Resources Listed on the National Register.

Scenic Byways: The Scenic Byways Program was created to identify travel routes across the country with significant scenic, natural resources, recreation, cultural, and historic values. In Massachusetts, designation requires an act of the state legislature or executive order from the Governor. Designation is followed by a corridor management plan to protect and enhance those values, and can be a critical source of funding to support trails, interpretive signage, and historic preservation activities, among others. As of April 2011, two corridors through the city are listed as Scenic Byways:

- Mohawk Trail Scenic Byway:** A 65-mile corridor extending from Williamstown to Athol. The trail derived its name from the historical battle when the Mohawk tribe marched and destroyed the Pocumtucks; in modern times it is known as a trade and scenic travel route. Present day Route 2 parallels many parts of the historic path, parts of which are still accessible for hiking. The many historic resources of North Adams are among the 100+ attractions to see along the trail.
- Mount Greylock Scenic Byway:** A 16.3-mile road corridor begins at the Western Gateway Heritage State Park (downtown North Adams) and then crosses Mount Greylock to its terminus in the Town of Lanesborough. The route traverses Mount Greylock, the highest point in Massachusetts and southern New England, and includes Bascom Lodge, Veterans War Memorial Tower, and exceptional panorama views into five states as points of interest along the Byway.

Table 9: North Adams Historic Resources Listed on the National Register

Historic Districts	Year Listed
Normal School Historic District	1985
Monument Square—Eagle Street Historic District	1972
Monument Square—Eagle Street Historic District (Boundary Increase)	1985
Freeman's Grove Historic District	1985
Freight Yard Historic District	1973
Church Street Historic District	1983
Church Street—Cady Hill Historic District (Boundary Increase)	1985
Blackinton Historic District	1985

Existing Conditions Summary

Historic Buildings and Sites	Year Listed
Armstrong House	1985
Arnold Print Works	1985
Beaver Mill	1973
The Boardman	1985
Charles Browne House	1985
Clowley House	1985
H.W. Clark Biscuit Company	2009
Hathaway Tenement (<i>demolished</i>)	1985
Hillside Cemetery	2001
Hoosac Tunnel	1973
Johnson Manufacturing Company (<i>demolished</i>)	1985
Johnson School	1985
Norad Mill	1985
Eber Sherman Farm	1982
William B. Sherman Farm	1985
St. Joseph School	1985
Sykes House	1985
Wells House	1985
Windsor Print Works	1973

Source: National Parks Service, National Register of Historic Places

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Venues and Attractions: This city is home to numerous cultural resources such as:

- **The Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art (MASS MoCA):** Formerly manufacturing facilities, today MASS MoCA is one of the nation's largest contemporary art museums. In 1986, following the closure of Sprague Electric Company, the community's business and political leaders began to seek ways to creatively re-use the vast complex of buildings and land. On May 30, 1999, as a result of private and public monies in excess of \$68.4 million, the museum campus was opened to the public. The institution is dedicated to the creation and presentation of provocative visual and performing arts pieces, and works that blur conventional distinctions between artistic disciplines. The Mass MoCA campus also hosts restaurants, retail offerings, and office space for rent.
- **The Mohawk Theater:** While this facility is still under redevelopment, it is an important cultural and historic landmark for the city. The future of the 1938 art-deco theater and former movie house is envisioned by community leaders as a modern, multi-purpose performing arts facility. At present a first phase of construction (completed in 2010) created a clean core and shell of the building. Partnering scenarios are under development, including collaborations with MCLA and Mass MOCA. The vision includes an extension of MCLA's Theatre Arts program into the downtown, creating teaching and training opportunities while providing a wide-range of entertainment options.
- **The North Adams Public Library:** The Library Trustees, Friends, staff and volunteers are dedicated to gathering, preserving and disseminating a wide variety of resources and information in various formats to meet the needs of the community, and to share resources with the larger library community. The library and its programs serve as a source of information for the community, supporting reading and lifelong learning at all ages, and offering programing in response to community needs. The Houghton Memorial Building, home to the library, is an historic landmark and gathering space in the community.
- **The Western Gateway Heritage State Park (Heritage State Park):** A former railroad yard, this urban park uses historical artifacts and exhibits to bring to life the controversial and danger-filled construction of the Hoosac Tunnel, one of the greatest engineering feats of the 19th century. In the

Visitor Center and Museum, residents and visitors are able to experience the impact that the railroad industry and the Hoosac Tunnel project had on both northern Berkshire County and America.

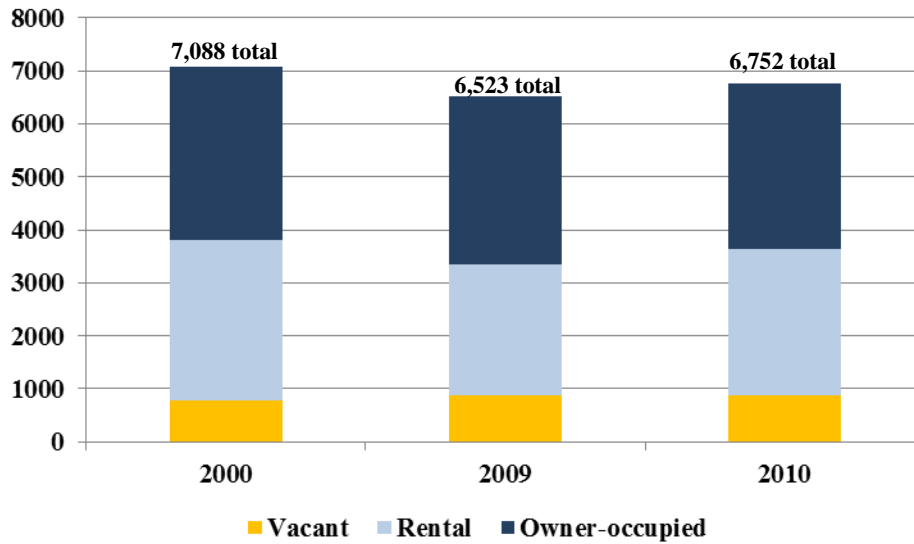
Events: Throughout the year, residents and visitors are able to attend a wide variety of free community-based events, including (but certainly not limited to):

- **Eagle Street Beach Party** is a community festival developed by resident and accomplished artist, Eric Rudd, during which 250,000 lbs of white sand is donated by Specialty Minerals and trucked in by the city's highway department. Running since 1999, the family-oriented party takes place on Eagle Street (temporarily closed to vehicles) and includes beach play items, music, food and an after-party for adults.
- **Mayor's Downtown Celebration**, held in late August annually, has been running since 1996, when it was developed to commemorate the completion of a street, sidewalk and lighting beautification project. The entire downtown is closed to all but pedestrian traffic for the thousands of visitors and residents attending the Downtown Celebration. There is food and entertainment, and organizations use the opportunity to distribute information.
- **Fall Foliage Celebration** is an annual celebration, developed a half century ago, was established to celebrate the advent of the fall foliage season. While the celebration's foundation is the natural beauty of the surrounding mountain ranges in the Hoosac Valley, a parade and other events have continued to attract residents and visitors for decades.
- **North Adams Farmers Market** offers home-grown fruits, vegetables and other produce from local farms. The market is typically held Saturday mornings from 8:00 AM to 12:30pm, early July through late October, in the St. Anthony municipal parking lot, a central downtown location with parking. To ensure all residents of the community are able to enjoy fresh produce most of the farmers accept food-assistance coupons.
- **Downstreet Art** is a program of MCLA's Berkshire Cultural Resource Center, running since 2008. The public art project is designed to revitalize downtown North Adams by transforming vacant and open spaces into art destinations. The last Thursday of each month DownStreet Art galleries and venues stay open late with exhibits and special offerings.
- **Winterfest** has been running for fifteen years as a celebration of winter activities. The festival includes ice carving, chowder contests, children's activities and other events on Main Street and other locations in the city including MASS MoCA.

HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOOD

North Adams had 6,752 housing units reported in the 2010 U.S. Census, a reduction of 336 from the 2000 U.S. Census. The percentage of rental units has remained steady during that time period, but the percentage of vacant units increased from 11% (770 units) in 2000 to 13.1% (884 units) in 2010. See Figure 13: Unit Occupancy Status.

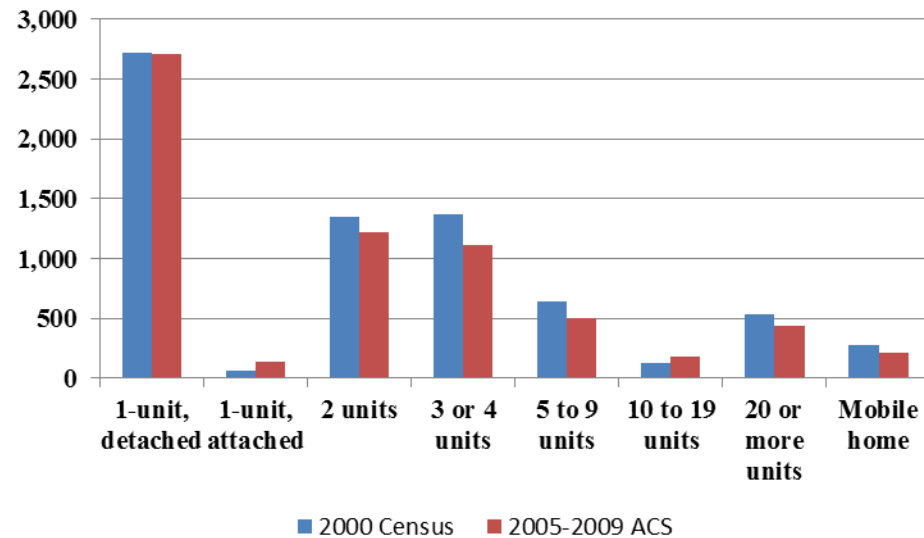
Figure 13: Unit Occupancy Status



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 and 2010 Census, 2005-2009 American Communities Survey data

North Adams has fairly diverse housing stock variety, in terms of the number of units per building. The dominant housing type is single-family (one-unit detached), which comprised 41.6% of the housing stock (2009 American Community Survey). Two-units (duplex) and three- or four-unit residences comprise the next highest percentages of housing stock, 18.7% and 17.1%, respectively. The largest growth between the 2000 Census and the 2005-2009 American Community Survey estimates were one-unit attached (+108.8%) and ten- to 19-unit buildings (+43.3%), but both are still the two least common in terms of proportion of all housing in the city. See Figure 14: Housing by Type.

Figure 14: Housing by Type



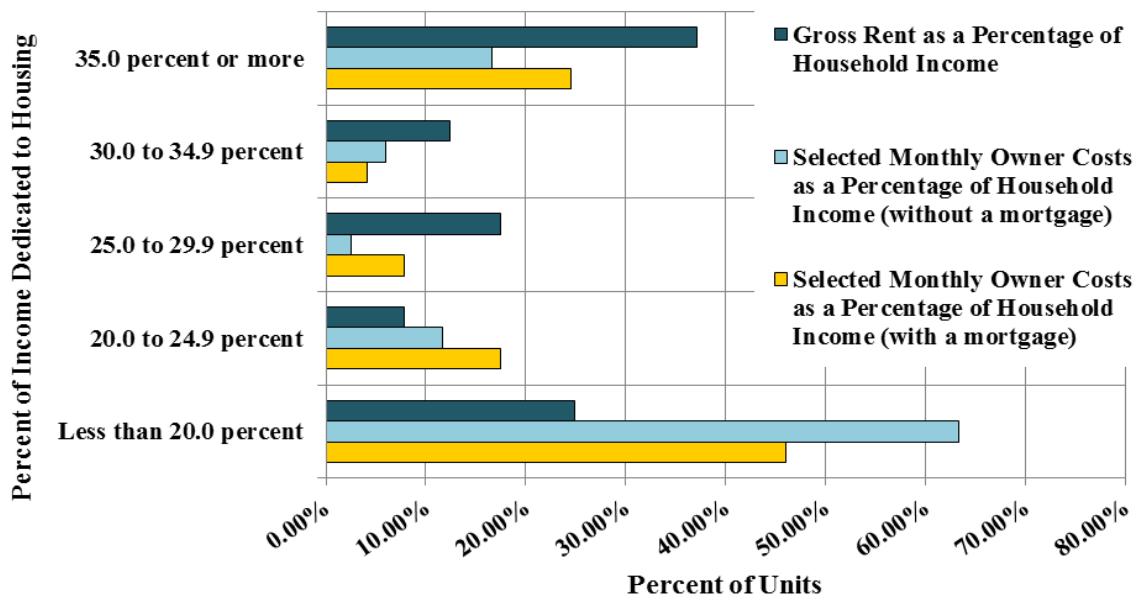
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census and 2005-2009 American Communities Survey data

According to the 2005-2009 American Communities Survey data, the majority (61%) of housing units were constructed prior to 1939. The age of the housing stock can be both a benefit and a challenge. The city has many historic structures and neighborhoods designated as national historic districts; however, deferred maintenance has impacted housing quality in certain areas over time. The city has worked in the past to identify and demolish vacant structures that pose a threat. Since 1990, the City has demolished 59 residential structures in which 170 residential units were eliminated.

Housing Affordability: Housing in the city is generally affordable; as a rule of thumb, a household should pay less than 30% of their income toward housing costs to maintain affordability. The majority of owner-occupied units appear to be affordable for their residents – 46.1% pay less than 20% of their income toward housing costs and 71.4% pay less than 30%. Renters, however, tend to face affordable housing issues, with 52.2% of renters paying more than 30% of their household income towards rent. See Figure 15: Proportion of Housing Costs Relative to Household Income, 2009.

As stated previously, between 2000 and 2009, the median household income rose 21% from \$27,601 to \$35,020 (U.S. Census). The pace of median housing sale price increased far more rapidly during that time, from \$73,000 in 2000 to \$104,500 in 2009, an increase of 43.2%. The decline of the housing market since 2008 slowed that growth significantly – between 2000 and 2007 there was an 84.2% increase (Banker and Tradesman). This means that households earning the city's median income can buy less house today than they could in 2000, even if they have continued to earn the median income.

Figure 15: Proportion of Housing Costs Relative to Household Income, 2009



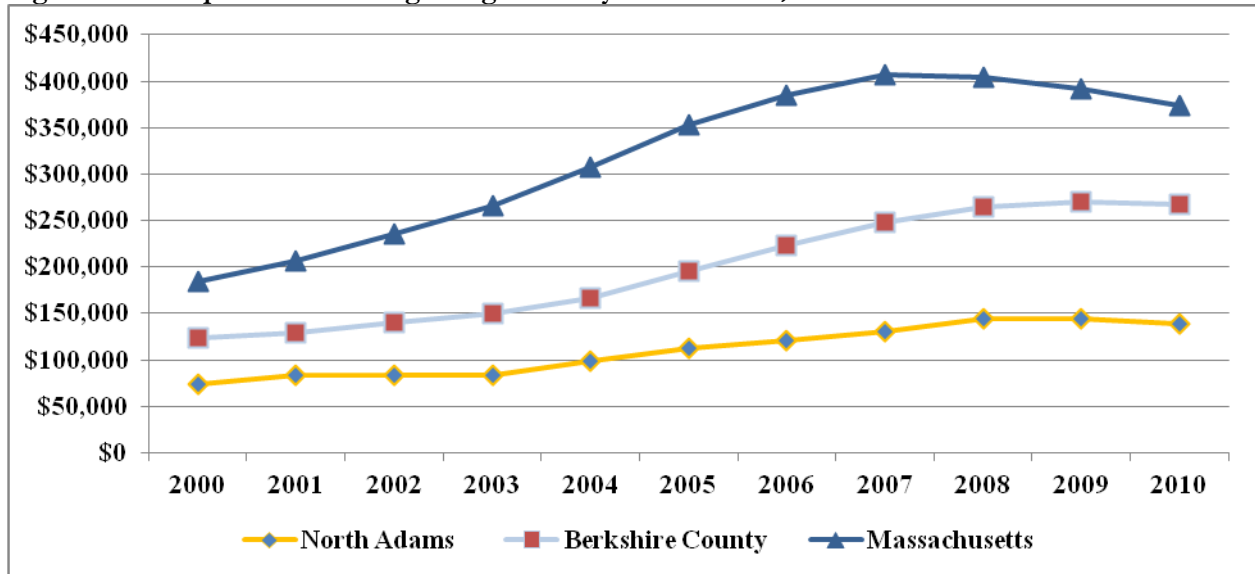
Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 2005-2009 American Community Survey data

According to the Massachusetts Department of Revenue, the average single-family home value in the city increased during the past decade, from \$74,611 in 2000 to \$138,963 in 2010. In the early part of the decade, values hovered around \$80,000 then in 2003 values began to increase. In 2008, the average single-family home value peaked at \$144,000.

The 2010 average home value in North Adams (\$138,963) is lower than the average for Berkshire County (\$267,143) and Massachusetts' (\$373,628). Since 2000 the gap in average home value has increased. In the city, the average home value was 40% lower than the county and 60% lower than the state in 2000. By 2010

this gap had widened and city average home value was 48% lower than the county and 63% lower than the state. See Figure 16: Comparison of Average Single-Family Home Value, 2000-2010.

Figure 16: Comparison of Average Single-Family Home Value, 2000-2010



Source: Massachusetts Department of Revenue, 2000-2010 data

Housing Foreclosures: Between 2000 and 2010, according to data from the Massachusetts Registry of Deeds, the City's home foreclosure trend gradually decreased in the early part of the decade through 2005, but then started to climb after 2005. In 2010, home foreclosures in the City reached a decade high of 39 homes foreclosed that year. See Figure 18: Trend of Foreclosures, 2000-2010.

Figure 17: Trend of Foreclosures, 2000-2010



Source: Massachusetts Registry of Deeds, Berkshire North office; 2000- 2010 foreclosure data

Subsidized Housing in North Adams: There are over 900 subsidized housing units within the City of North Adams. The earliest, Greylock Valley Apartments, was built in 1962, and the most recent, Clark Biscuit Apartments, was reconstructed in 2009. The North Adams Housing Authority and the Berkshire Housing

Development Corporation each manage multiple buildings (described below), while additional individual buildings are held by private companies.

The North Adams Housing Authority has 179 units designated as elderly/disabled and they operate a family development. They recently entered into a long-term contract with the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development to retrofit all of its units for energy efficiency.

- The Ashland Park Apartments are located at 150 Ashland St. Ashland Park is an eight story building equipped with an elevator.
- The Spring Park Apartments are located at 45 Spring Street and is a five story building equipped with an elevator. Ashland Park and Spring Park offer one and two bedroom units as well as handicapped units.
- The Greylock Valley Apartments is a family development located in the west end of North Adams. This 96-apartment development has units ranging in size from one bedroom to four bedrooms.

The Berkshire Housing Development Corporation has two affordable housing developments in North Adams.

- The Clark Biscuit Apartments on Ashland Street is an adaptive reuse of a formerly vacant historic mill in the area of MCLA. The 43 units provide affordable rental apartments for families.
- Holy Family Terrace, located on State Street, has 39 affordable and ADA accessible housing units for the elderly.

The historic approach to developing subsidized housing approach in North Adams has concentrated units together. This can result in greater socio-economic stratification of the city overall and encourage pockets of poverty and related community issues. The Ashland Park Apartments have been criticized for mixing residents with differing needs (i.e. elderly and mentally ill), leading to tenant safety concerns.

In an effort to promote widespread availability of affordable housing, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts encourages at least 10% of a municipality's year-round housing units to be low- and moderate-income, subsidized units. If this requirement is met, the community maintains local control in the case of a Comprehensive Permit application (Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 40B). North Adams meets and exceeds the threshold with 13.1% of its units qualifying as low- and moderate-income, subsidized housing, as of July, 2011. Only 39 communities in Massachusetts had also met their goal as of July, 2011.

Housing and Neighborhood Support

The Northern Berkshire Community Coalition is a non-profit agency working to improve the quality of life for people in Northern Berkshire County. The Coalition's programs address the following concerns: creating a public place for community, mobilizing for change on alcohol use, building stronger neighborhoods, and promoting positive youth development. Of particular note, the Northern Berkshire Neighbors program has three main tenets: outreach, organizing and planning. Outreach workers (volunteer community members) address needs for social services, while the organizing function seeks to build support for issues such as affordable housing and job creation, and the planning activities focus on capacity building at the neighborhood level.

PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES

The city's infrastructure and services, as in any municipality, are an essential part of the community. The many components of this system support livability, quality of life and economic development. The following section provides an overview of the current conditions of the infrastructure and services in North Adams.

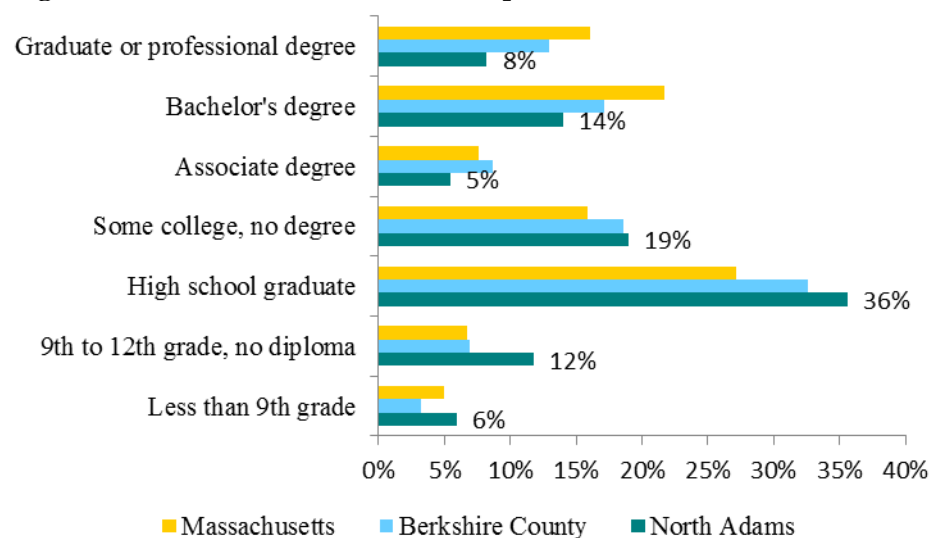
GOVERNMENTAL STRUCTURE

North Adams has a strong Mayor-City Council form of government consisting of the mayor and nine councilors each of whom is an at-large elected member. The City Council typically meets twice a month; day-to-day activities are overseen by the Mayor. The city currently employs approximately 400 full-time and part-time staff. There are also 24 other boards and committees that advise and help guide the operation and direction of the community, including the Planning Board and Community & Economic Development Advisory Board (CEDAB).

EDUCATION

North Adams has elementary, secondary, vocational and college-level education facilities within the city, and residents have some alternative education options. The educational attainment of North Adams residents lags behind other Berkshire County and Massachusetts residents. According to the 2005-2009 American Communities Survey, 8.2% of city residents have received a Graduate or professional degree, while 13.0% in the county and 16.1% in the state have. Similarly, 14% of North Adams residents have a Bachelor's while 17.1% of county residents and 21.7% of state residents have achieved one. The percentage of those with an Associate's degree is also lower, 5.4%, compared to county and state residents, 8.6% and 7.6%, respectively. Perhaps most concerning is the higher rate of those who have completed some amount of 9-12th grades without receiving a diploma – 11.8% of the North Adams population, compared to 6.9% of county and 6.7% of state residents. See Figure 18: Educational Attainment Comparison. In recognition of these low rates of educational attainment, the Berkshire Compact, a program of MCLA, was formed and is actively working to promote a 16-year or longer continuum of education for young residents.

Figure 9: Educational Attainment Comparison, 2005-2009



Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2005-2009 American Community Survey data

Early Childhood Education

There are three Early Childhood Education providers within the city: Berkshire County Head Start Child Development Program, Inc., North Adams Public Schools, and Child Care of the Berkshires. Supportive services, such as referrals and developmental assessments, are also available through Northern Berkshire Early Intervention Program. Some early childhood education programmatic highlights include:

- **Early Childhood Education Think Tank:** Child Care of the Berkshires, Berkshire County Head Start, and the Berkshire Compact all participate in the Early Childhood Education Think Tank, a

countywide committee focused on raising the profile and performance of early childhood education in the region.

- **Reach Out and Read:** All pediatricians in the city participate in the Reach Out and Read program which promotes literacy at annual child well visits.
- **Story Walks:** Child Care of the Berkshires initiated Story Walks in downtown North Adams during which pages of an early childhood-level book are placed in different storefronts and are read as a group on a walk, making it an interactive experience.

Kindergarten - Grade 12

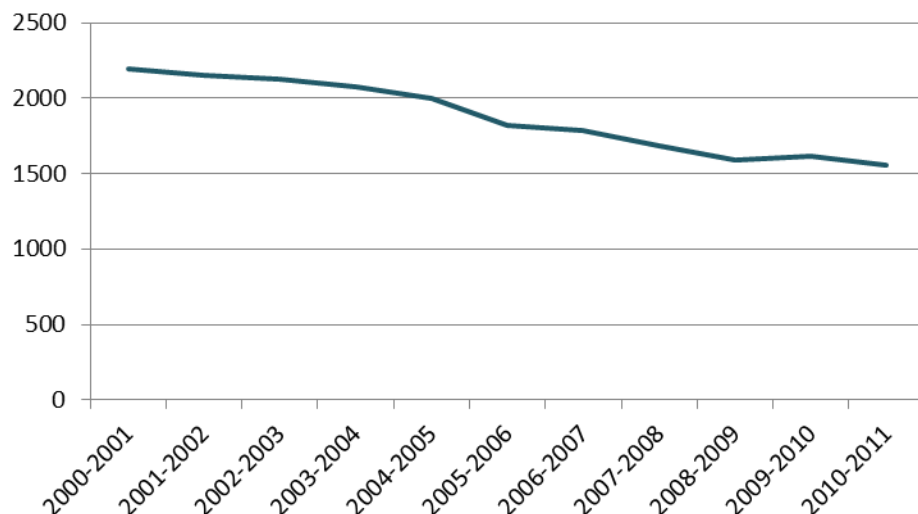
Public schools in the city are all within the North Adams Public School District which provides K-12 educational. See Table 15: Student Enrollment by School, 2000-2010. The district is a Massachusetts “School of Choice District” which allows children within and outside of the community to opt in or out of the district. As a result, NASD educates children the towns of Florida, Clarksburg, Monroe, Savoy and Stamford and Readsboro, VT in addition to North Adams. North Adams students may also attend schools elsewhere. The District is also in the process of addressing their aging facilities and physical space needs. The Charles H. McCann Technical School is considered its own district, the Northern Berkshire Vocational Regional School District.

Table 10: Student Enrollment by School, 2000-2010

Academic Year	Brayton Elementary	Greylock Elementary	J. S. Sullivan Elementary	Silvio O Conte Middle	Drury High	Total
2000-2001	499	237	320	526	613	2,195
2001-2002	471	213	316	499	651	2,150
2002-2003	466	230	311	509	608	2,124
2003-2004	429	226	286	511	625	2,077
2004-2005	400	231	269	475	622	1,997
2005-2006	342	221	256	417	583	1,819
2006-2007	356	235	253	352	593	1,789
2007-2008	364	229	224	323	544	1,684
2008-2009	336	225	214	318	499	1,592
2009-2010	458	268	270	X	616	1,612
2010-2011	467	247	265	X	578	1,557

Source: Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2000-2010 data

The NASD has seen enrollments steadily decrease over the past few years, leading to the dissolution of the one middle school into the elementary and high schools after the 2008-2009 academic years. As referenced in the demographic discussion, the young family age cohorts have reduced over the last decade. See Figure 3: Age Distribution, 2000-2010. See Figure 19: Student Enrollment, North Adams School District, 2000-2011.

Figure 19: Student Enrollment, North Adams School District, 2000-2011

Source: Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2000-2010 data

Elementary Schools

The North Adams School District (NASD) operates three elementary schools in the City: Brayton, J.S. Sullivan and Greylock. MCAS scores indicate that third graders in the school district consistently post lower proficiency rates than in the county overall in both English and math. Third grade reading is widely recognized as a critical indicator for long-term literacy and school performance.

Table 11: Percent of Third Graders Testing Proficient or Above on the MCAS, 2006-2010

	MCAS English		MCAS Math	
	NASD	County	NASD	County
2006	51	58	48	46
2007	54	61	58	60
2008	53	53	56	62
2009	44	60	44	62

Source: Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2000-2010 data

High Schools

There are two high schools within the city:

- **Drury High School:** Drury High School is the only high school within the North Adams School District and educates grades 8-12 since the dissolution of Silvio O. Conte Middle School after the 2008-2009 academic year.
- **Charles H. McCann Technical School:** McCann provides grades 9-12 and post-secondary vocational training programs. The school was recently selected by the Berkshire County Regional Employment Board to facilitate a Photovoltaic Entry-Level Training program.

Over the past decade, the North Adams School District has been recognized numerous times for its programs and educational opportunities. However, during the 2006-2010 academic years, there were higher levels students dropping out compared to the state. While an average of 75 percent of students

consistently graduated from the District's programs, this graduation percentage is approximately 6 percent lower than the State's average of 81 percent. McCann has a consistently higher graduation rate.

Table 12: Comparison of Four-year Graduation Rates (All Students), 2005-2010

Completion Status	School	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Graduated	Drury	75.20%	72.30%	78.40%	72.70%	74.70%
	McCann	96.50%	95.70%	94.30%	92.30%	91.80%
	State	82.10%	81.50%	81.20%	80.90%	79.90%
Non-Grad Completers	Drury	0.70%	1.30%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
	McCann	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
	State	0.90%	0.80%	0.70%	0.90%	1.00%
GED	Drury	3.90%	1.30%	3.90%	2.90%	0.60%
	McCann	0.90%	0.90%	0.00%	2.90%	0.00%
	State	2.00%	2.10%	2.00%	2.00%	0.80%
Dropped Out	North Adams	11.10%	18.10%	14.40%	16.30%	15.60%
	McCann	1.80%	3.40%	5.70%	2.90%	4.10%
	State	8.20%	9.30%	9.90%	9.40%	11.70%

Source: Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2005-2010 data

Post-Secondary and Vocational

In the City, McCann Technical School and the Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts (MCLA) are engaged in educating and training workers and professionals needed in the local and regional economy. McCann Technical offers day classes for Cosmetology, Dental Assisting, Medical Assisting and Surgical Technology as well as evening classes for Practical Nursing.

MCLA (approximately 2,000 persons enrolled) offers programs such as a Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science, Masters of Education programs, Certificate of Advanced Graduate Study (CAGS) and a newly launched Professional Masters of Business Administration program. MCLA also has extensive professional development opportunities for the region's teachers and K-12 administrators. In October 2011, MCLA broke ground on its new Center for Science and Innovation, funded by the state through a Higher Education Bond Bill. The Center for Science and Innovation will serve as a central location for all of MCLA's science and related programs.

Compact for Education

Members of Berkshire Compact for Education (Compact), the North Adams School District, Charles H. McCann Technical School and MCLA are working with educators across Berkshire County to build partnerships and work collaboratively to improve educational outcomes for all ages and promote a culture of lifelong learning. A key focus of the Compact is to increase successful transitions from high school to either higher learning or professional or trade school and apprenticeships. They have also recently taken an active role in the area of early childhood education through the Readiness Center and participation on the countywide Early Childhood Education Think Tank.

TRANSPORTATION

North Adams has multi-modal transportation networks and options for its residents and visitors.

Automotive

The city's roadway network includes state and local highways and streets, including approximately 105 miles of roads (includes portions of Routes 2 and 8, as well as bridges and sidewalks). Most vehicle trips to and from the city utilize the east-west Route 2 corridor, as well as Route 8 from the south.

- **Interstate Highway:** A limitation of North Adams' location is a lack of easy connection to the Interstate Highway System. It is about 35 miles to either Route 91 (north-south) or Route 90 (east-west).
- **Route 2 (Mohawk Trail):** This east-west corridor is a major travel route to and from North Adams, parts of it more heavily traveled outside of the winter storm season. At signalized or regulated intersections, congestion conditions occur during the busy morning and afternoon commute times, particularly during events and seasonal peaks.
- **Route 8 (Curran Memorial Highway):** This north-south corridor connects the city to the southern Vermont and Berkshire County's urban core to the south. Development along this highway is limited; it is likely that future development to the south will increase the traffic along this corridor. The growth and redevelopment will need to be carefully planned to ensure a high level of service for the area and community. The Hadley Overpass is currently being improved.
- **Downtown Streets:** The local street network downtown has developed over time generally following the natural features (i.e. river and steep slopes) of the community and is mostly in fair to good condition. Circulation patterns can be confusing due to one-way streets and overpasses. There are congestion issues but widening or re-routing is often complicated by terrain and current development.
- **Residential Streets:** The street networks within residential areas tend to lack connectivity to the larger roadway network and neighborhood centers. While this creates the benefit of lower traffic counts and congestion related issues; it also limits the number of roadways that can be used to travel across the city, resulting in higher congestion levels on certain collector and arterial roadways.

Pedestrian and Bicycling Networks

There is a great and growing demand for a more robust bike and pedestrian system in downtown retail and neighborhood areas as well as regional connections between communities.

- **Downtown:** The downtown has seen a number of streetscape improvements to make the pedestrian experience more inviting. These include visible painted crosswalks, new street lighting, and improved sidewalks.
- **Sidewalks:** The majority of the city's streets have sidewalks on one or both sides, however maintenance and obstructions still make pedestrian movement challenging in some places. The city's terrain can also be challenging, particularly for wheelchairs or strollers, particularly in the winter months when snow and ice can block sidewalks and create icy conditions.
- **Bike Paths:** The city is making efforts to become connected to the Ashuwillticook Trail to the south and to develop a shared use path west along Route 2 to connect to Williamstown and North Adams. Both could be developed in a way that accents and utilizes the Hoosic River.

- **Major Trail Connections:** There are non-vehicle paths that need improvement and development. The juncture of the Appalachian Trail needs enhancement such as signage to direct travelers downtown, with similar improvements needed for the Mohawk-Mohican pedestrian trail.

Other Modes of Transportation

- **Transit:** The city of North Adams is a participating community in the Berkshire Regional Transit Authority (BRTA). Through the BRTA system, residents are able to access other parts of the county and region through a variety of public transportation services. The schedules and fees are dependent upon the route and destination. BRTA routes are illustrated on the *Transportation* map. There are two other transit options in North Adams, for qualifying residents and trips. Berkshire Rides offers van service by appointment for north County residents' locations of employment or secondary education, and to bring children to daycare. Berkshire Rides is available to everyone, but the full-service is for persons who do not live along a transit route; they must instead ride the BRTA. Berkshire Rides transports other residents from their home to a bus stop (at no cost), or directly to their destination (\$2/trip charge). The North Adams Council on Aging offers a route service for elderly and disabled city residents from their residence to adult day care in the morning and afternoon. In between the hours of that fixed route, the Council on Aging also offer individual and group pickups within North Adams (\$1.50 each way) and from North Adams to Adams or Williamstown (\$2 each way).
- **Airport:** The Harriman and West Airport, a municipally owned and operated facility, is located on Budd Dougherty Way off Route 2. Service to and from this facility is primarily general aviation with limited private jet usage. The facility recently completed a multi-million dollar runway and safety improvement project.
- **Rail:** The Boston and Maine Pan Am/Norfolk Southern line, a freight rail line, operates in the city. This rail line travels 14 miles through Williamstown into North Adams and on to Florida and Adams; a 5-mile spur from North Adams to Adams serves Specialty Minerals. This line also runs through the historic Hoosac Tunnel. While this line is commonly seen as a secondary rail provider in the county, this rail corridor has the ability to be expanded both on capacity and service (i.e. passenger). The Massachusetts Department of Transportation 2011 Rail Plan calls for increasing the weight limits along this route; however, timing and funding have not been identified.

PUBLIC UTILITY SYSTEM

Wastewater

In North Adams the wastewater service is provided to most residents and businesses through the municipally owned and operated wastewater system. The treatment of effluent gathered from the system is provided through the Hoosac Water Quality District (HWQD). The HWQD is a multi-jurisdiction facility, treating effluent from North Adams, Williamstown and a small portion of Clarksburg. While the small southern portion of the Clarksburg's wastewater system connects to HWQD through the North Adams Wastewater system, all maintenance and service of lines and infrastructure within Clarksburg is handled by the Town of Clarksburg. See the Infrastructure Map.

The HWQD wastewater treatment plant has approximately 6.5 million gallons per day of effluent treatment capacity. Currently the plant operates at about 74 percent capacity. The operation and maintenance costs of the treatment plant are currently paid by each community, based on their level of effluent entering the plant. The city is producing approximately 65% of the effluent treated at the HWQD wastewater treatment plant.

Much of the City's wastewater system is operating beyond its life expectancy (i.e. many lines are upwards of 100 years old), and the need has grown for conducting regular inspections and maintenance and addressing system deficiencies. Simultaneously, the level of inflow and infiltration into the City's effluent, being processed at the HWQD treatment plant, has increased.

Water

The water used for consumption and fire protection is provided through a city-owned and -operated municipal water system. The water system also serves approximately 100 homes in Clarksburg and Williamstown. A map of the water system is shown on the Public Utility Service map. The water treatment plant processed almost 670 million gallons of potable water in 2010. Currently the plant operates at about 50 percent capacity. The system relies on a number of storage tanks and reservoirs to provide essential water supply consumption and fire protection needs. At the storage facilities there is approximately 2.5 million gallons of storage capacity (two 1 million gallon tanks, one 750 thousand gallon tank, and 400 gallon clear well). With this amount of storage capacity, service and fire protection capacity can only be met for 6-8 hours. See the Infrastructure Map.

The water system, much like the wastewater system, is operating beyond its life expectancy and contains a number of deficiencies. Water line construction and materials make inspecting and maintenance of the system costly and labor intensive. Since the water system is an essential component of the City's fire protection system it is vital that the system has adequate pressure and all elements of the system are in operation.

Stormwater System

There is a mixture of public and private stormwater management infrastructure. Much of the private infrastructure consists of on-lot retention ponds or storm drains. In most instances, the private systems connect to the larger network of stormwater infrastructure. Due to gaps in institutional knowledge and limited mapped data, the location and state of the municipal stormwater infrastructure is for the most part unknown.

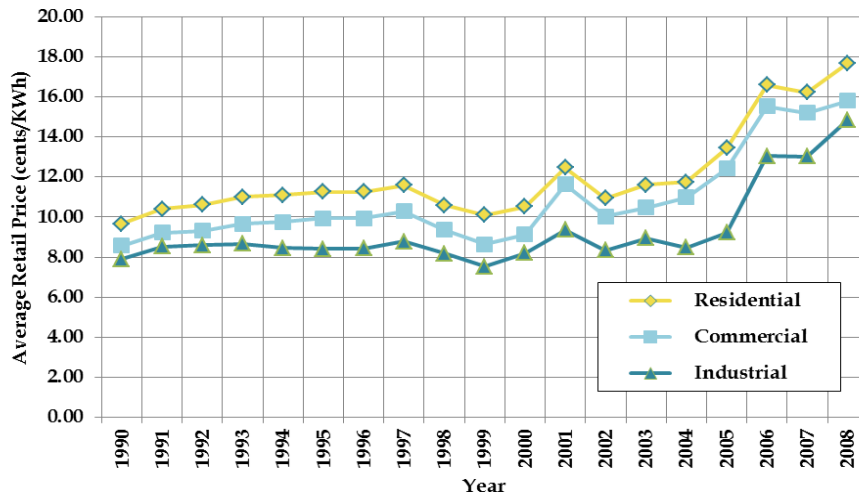
ENERGY AND UTILITIES

Renewable Energy

The city has completed Green Communities Technical Assistance and is currently working to meet the criteria to be designated as a Green Community through the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources (DOER). The city has already passed the Stretch Energy Code, an optional appendix to the state Building code which calls for efficiency improvements over the standard code. North Adams has also been actively pursuing renewable energy options; it is in the permitting process for a 4-megawatt photovoltaic system to be installed on the high school, landfill, airport and the old wastewater treatment plant. The proposed power purchase agreement, which will result, is expected to save the city \$11 million over 20 years.

Electricity

Electric service in the city is provided by National Grid Electric Company. This energy company provides service throughout the city and other communities in Berkshire County. In recent years, National Grid has completed the upgrade of customer meters in order to read meters remotely. The company has also been working with energy generation developers to install renewable energy resources (i.e. wind, solar, hydro, etc.) so more green energy can be provided to its customers. In accordance with state law, National Grid distributes 5 percent of its energy from renewable energy resources.

Figure 20: A Comparison of Energy Rates by Provider for Massachusetts Distributors

Source: Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, Department of Public Utilities

National Grid has been addressing network deficiencies and energy disruptions over the past decade. Through a recent capital improvement campaign, National Grid has worked to update and upgrade its distribution network. National Grid has worked closely with the City, residents and local businesses to educate and examine the potential of renewable energy opportunities (Drury High School, the North Adams Public Library and Mass MoCA). Possible locations for wind electricity generation facilities are illustrated on the *Infrastructure* map.

Communications

Most businesses today consider broadband communication capacity a necessity. The City of North Adams does receive wireless and broadband service; however, in certain instances this service is of reduced quality. This issue of reduced quality of service or coverage is also a regional issue.

Initial steps taken by WesternMA Connect, Inc. (formerly Berkshire Connect and Pioneer Valley Connect) have made great strides toward the developing and improving service of telecommunication services to the Berkshires and the great western Massachusetts. In concert with WesternMA Connect, Inc. efforts, there is an emerging initiative to develop “Last-Mile” telecommunications infrastructure in western Massachusetts, the neighborhood-level service. This initiative is a collaborative effort being pursued by WiredWest and approximately 50 communities throughout western Massachusetts. The proposed infrastructure will build upon the proposed equipment being installed under the WesternMA Connect, Inc. initiative.

PUBLIC SAFETY SERVICES

North Adams has an overarching Public Safety Division which provides Police, Fire, Emergency Management, Public Health and Animal Control services. There is one Public Safety Complex located at 40 American Legion Drive, in the center of downtown. The Fire and Police Departments both note the facility and replacement vehicles as necessary capital improvements in the near term.

Fire Department

The Fire Department consists of 24 professional full-time firefighters trained in a variety of disciplines including hazardous materials, Fire Fighter I/II, Fire Rescue, 1st Responder and as emergency medical technicians. The fire house (part of the larger Public Safety complex) contains emergency response equipment and vehicles, 3 engines, 1 ladder truck, 1 all-terrain vehicle, 1 mass-decontamination unit, and other support vehicles. In addition to providing fire protection, the North Adams Fire Department also

responds to rescue and hazardous emergency calls and provides fire awareness/training program annually in the local school district. The department does not provide emergency transportation services; those are provided by the North Adams Ambulance Service.

Police Department

The North Adams Police Department currently employs 25 full-time Officers and 8 reservists. At this level of staffing, there is a ratio of one full-time officer for every 548 residents. The police department provides a wide range of services and programs including police patrol, criminal investigations, search and rescue operations, drug enforcement, neighborhood watch program, youth resources (i.e. Resource Officers, DARE and Respecting Other People Encouraging Self-Esteem (R.O.P.E.S.)) and a senior program (TRIAD). The department has access to 15 cruisers, these vehicles are typically replaced when the vehicle logs 120,000 miles or are damaged beyond repair.

During the years of 2006-2009, North Adams has a higher violent and property crime rate than Berkshire County and Massachusetts. Due to the limited data available, these are the only recent years which can be compared for the three areas. See Table 13: Property and Violent Crime Rates, 2006-2008. Note that the crime rate describes the number of crimes per 100,000 residents.

Table 13: Property and Violent Crime Rates, 2006-2008

Type of Crime	Area	2006	2007	2008
Violent Crime Rate (per 100,000)	North Adams	659.86	676.95	616.79
	Berkshire County	448.50	401.10	400.50
	Massachusetts	447.00	431.50	449.00
Property Crime Rate (per 100,000)	North Adams	4051.37	3690.49	4600.54
	Berkshire County	2215.4	2929.7	2294.5
	Massachusetts	2391	2391.5	2400.1

Source: U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigations

HEALTH CARE SERVICES

The Northern Berkshire Healthcare (NBH) group is the primary healthcare provider for the City and surrounding communities and there are a number of private practitioners. NBH, a private nonprofit organization, provides a wide range of medical services to its communities. While NBH does host satellite medical offices in other communities, its primary facility is North Adams Regional Hospital (NARH). NARH is a full-service, community-based hospital with staff including internists, family care practitioners and a broad range of specialists. This facility has been in operation for over a century and provides 24-hour emergency services and is licensed for 120 beds, however, the hospital currently operates 65-70 beds. Minimal transit service has been identified as a barrier to service provision at NARH.

Subsequent to filing for bankruptcy in June, 2011, due to excessive debt burden and pension liabilities, NBH underwent reorganization and debt restructuring. Losses have since been greatly reduced and the North Adams Regional Hospital reported a profit from the start of the 2012 fiscal year (October 1, 2011) to the end of February, 2012. NBH leadership is optimistic about emerging from bankruptcy stronger.

SOLID WASTE

Solid Waste: In North Adams, the collection of solid waste (including recyclables) is done through the municipal Transfer Station or contracted solid waste collectors. The rate associated with contracted solid waste collection varies, while the City requires users to purchase an entrance sticker (stickers are valid from July 1st through June 30th and temporary monthly stickers) to use the transfer station. The North Adams Transfer Station accepts municipal solid waste (general refuse, appliances, brush, tires, non-compacting material) and recyclable material from commercial haulers, city residents and non-residents who purchase an entrance sticker. The disposal of televisions and monitors is also allowed; however, there is an additional fee. To complement alternatives, there is also a local scrapyard that takes metal refuse.

At this time, the city's Transfer Station does not accept hazardous waste such as batteries, oil, fluorescent lamps, pesticides, paints or stains, solvents, treated wood or wood with lead paint, asphalt pavement, brick or concrete.